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Before this it was day all the time, but then it became night and coyote only laughs at night. The black strings still hang about badger's neck."

It is strange to find, too, that a flood legend is traditional among the Seris. Chico said: "In the times of the ancients a great flood came, the ocean rose up and all the country of the Seris was under water except the top of Cerro Alto. There a few Seris gathered and were saved. Everyone else was drowned. To this day the top of Cerro Alto is covered with brush which the flood did not submerge. All Seri children are taught this flood tradition, and they must learn it by heart so as to teach their children and their grandchildren."

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The death of a tribesman gives no cause for ceremony among the Seris, although the nearest relatives may customarily wail, sometimes for months, morning and evening. The disposal of the bodies of the dead, is, however, of considerable interest. A hole about three feet deep is dug by means of large clam shells and a cave is excavated for the head such that the earth will not touch it. The deceased Indian is wrapped in his own blanket and laid in the grave with the head to the East, face up. The body is covered and the grave is partly filled with earth, then covered with a layer of the spiniest of chollas and thorny brush, further filled, leveled and covered with another layer of chollas to discourage the coyotes from digging up the body. When the Seris are on the move, however, and grave-digging is too great a task, a body may simply be lifted high to the fork of a giant cactus and left there.

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Marriage among the Seris is not so much a ceremony as it is the completion of a bargain. Under ordinary circumstances, when a man buys a woman he strikes a bargain with the bride's parents and makes a down payment. Only after completion of the bargain does the woman go to live with the man, but even then payments do not cease but continue intermittently through life. Chico Romero, although "married" for fifteen years, gave his wife's father some paint that he had received in payment for guiding and packing. It is also considered natural to buy and sell children. One Seri, Santo

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[p. 266 (B)]
[Text continues on p. 267 (B)]

425 Blanco, whose son was only sixteen years
old, bought outright for him a little girl of
658 six years.

621 When contracts for fish were secured by
the Mexicans from American markets in

[p. 267(B)]

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FIG. 1. Area of Present Seri Occupation

One descendant of this band states that long ago his ancestors wandered north from the region of Guaymas. Eventually, they established land rights to the coastal area extending from Campo Ona on the south to Puerto Lobos on the north. Before long, however, they relinquished claim to the area between Campo Ona and Punta Tepopa.

It is to be understood, of course, that groups from this band, as well as groups from other bands, at times ranged far afield from their respective territories. Band I, for instance, had campsites as far north as the mouth of the Colorado River.

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Little information could be elicited about subdivisions 7, 8, 9, and 10. The reason for this might be that Band VI was slow in abandoning those coastal areas (if it actually did inhabit them) as it was being displaced by Bands III and IV.

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The Seri say that long ago several men, called ?ant i?akimhoh "they who explain the land," came to Tiburon Island and told the people along the eastern shore that they owned also a corresponding strip of land on the mainland. Thus the inhabitants of subdivisions 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 laid claim to the coastal areas directly across the channel from them as shown by the dotted lines on Fig. 4. They assumed that their new territories extended inland to include as much terrain as they chose to claim. At first the people went to their mainland areas primarily to gather cactus fruit. Eventually some of them remained on the mainland and established subdivisions 11 and 12. This establishment superseded the claims of the five Tiburon Island subdivisions to their mainland territories. Although the mainland subdivisions 11 and 12 formed, in some respects, a separate band in their own right, they retained their name, to?eoukw kongkaak "the people of Tiburon Island." Eventually this group returned to Tiburon.

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Of subdivisions 13 and 14 which are shown on Fig. 4, very little is known. The people of subdivision 13 inhabited an area encompassing the northern end of the dry lake, La Playa Noriega (San Bartolo). Some of the Seri believe that these people were giants. Although in this area I have found clay figurines and other artifacts common to abandoned camps elsewhere, the Seri do not know the names of the camps of this subdivision. Subdivision 14 occupied the area surrounding the southern end of the same dry lake.

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Subdivision 15 occupied the general area which is now Villa de Seris, a settlement on the southern edge of Hermosillo. As Hermosillo grew, it became increasingly difficult for these Seri to maintain their customary way of life, and they eventually returned to Tiburon Island.

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BAND VI

Band VI became divided into four subdivisions, the names of which are:

znitom

pahii

kofte oki ifa

kotih

"_____"

"flint"

"large iguana peninsula"

"tubular"

BAND V

It was stated above that this band fought with Band II and then with Band I. Since Band V was likely killing cattle, they also may have been harassed by soldiers. Eventually Band V abandoned its territory near Punta Tepopa and headed south along the coast to a camp near present-day Bahia Kino. From this camp the entire group disappeared and was never seen again by members of the other bands. The Seri of today believe that Band V either traveled inland or was destroyed by a non-Seri force.

BAND II

These people were rustlers and marauders. Government intervention in the situation was inevitable. The Seri recount the following final encounter between this group and the government forces.

The entire remaining membership of Band II was hiding out in a nearly inaccessible swamp thicket at Bahia Kino. Knowing that an armed force of soldiers and ranchers was searching for them, the people left their camp to seek safety elsewhere. Almost immediately they were attacked by the superior armed force which proceeded to wipe out the whole group. A youth who had avoided capture is said to have reported the affair to the Seri on Tiburon Island. This event may have occurred during the Encinas Wars fought from 1855 to 1865.

BAND VI

The members of this band on San Esteban Island were little interested in the mainland and did not participate in the raids on man and livestock there. Nevertheless, they were to share in the severe punishment meted out to the bands guilty of multitudinous depredations.

Sometime after the massacre of Band II, a ship arrived at San Esteban, and many of the people were induced to go aboard. The rest of the inhabitants followed the ship to a camp on the eastern side of Tiburon Island where they were to receive gifts. As the people congregated, they were herded into a stone corral. Apparently, some of the San Esteban men were killed at this time. The rest of them, along with the women and children, were taken to Santa Rosa point on the mainland. Here, the Seri say, more of the men were killed. The remaining men were strung together by wire and led away, never to return.

The San Esteban women and children, along with some Tiburon Island women and children (of Band III), were taken in